

By: Perez

H.B. No. 1628

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to authorization by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board for certain public junior colleges to offer baccalaureate degree programs.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

SECTION 1. Section 130.0012, Education Code, is amended by amending Subsections (a), (b), (e), and (g) and adding Subsections (b-4), (b-5), (b-6), (e-1), and (g-1) to read as follows:

(a) The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board may ~~[shall]~~ authorize public junior colleges to offer baccalaureate degree programs in the fields of applied science, ~~[and]~~ applied technology, and nursing under this section. Offering a baccalaureate degree program under this section does not otherwise alter the role and mission of a public junior college.

(b) The coordinating board:

(1) shall authorize baccalaureate degree programs at each public junior college that previously participated in a pilot project to offer baccalaureate degree programs; and

(2) may authorize baccalaureate degree programs at one or more public junior colleges that offer a degree program in the field of nursing and have demonstrated a workforce need.

(b-4) The coordinating board shall establish a pilot project to examine the feasibility and effectiveness of authorizing not more than two baccalaureate degree programs, one in the field of

1 applied science or applied technology, and one in the field of
2 nursing at a public junior college with a main campus located in a
3 county with a population greater than 3.3 million.

4 (b-5) Not later than January 1, 2019, the coordinating board
5 shall prepare a progress report on the pilot project established
6 under Subsection (b-4). Not later than January 1, 2021, the
7 coordinating board shall prepare a report on the effectiveness of
8 the pilot project, including any recommendations for legislative
9 action regarding the offering of baccalaureate degree programs in
10 the fields of applied science, applied technology, and nursing by a
11 public junior college. The coordinating board shall deliver a copy
12 of each report to the governor, the lieutenant governor, the
13 speaker of the house of representatives, and the chair of the
14 standing committee of each house of the legislature with primary
15 jurisdiction over higher education. Unless the authority to
16 continue offering a baccalaureate degree program in the fields of
17 applied science, applied technology, and nursing is continued by
18 the legislature, a public junior college may not:

19 (1) enroll a new student in a baccalaureate degree
20 program under the pilot project after the 2022 fall semester;

21 (2) offer junior-level or senior-level courses for
22 those degree programs after the 2025 fall semester, unless the
23 coordinating board authorizes the college to offer those courses;
24 or

25 (3) award a baccalaureate degree under the pilot
26 project after the 2025 fall semester, unless the coordinating board
27 approves the awarding of the degree.

1 (b-6) This subsection and Subsections (b-4) and (b-5)
2 expire on the first December 31 following the first regular
3 legislative session that occurs after the sixth anniversary of the
4 date a public junior college offering a degree program in the fields
5 of applied science, applied technology, and nursing under
6 Subsection (b-4) meets the accreditation requirements of
7 Subsection (c).

8 (e) In determining whether a public junior college may offer
9 [what] baccalaureate degree programs and what degree programs may
10 [are to] be offered, the coordinating board shall consider the
11 following factors:

12 (1) the workforce need for the degree programs in the
13 region served by the junior college;

14 (2) how those degree programs would complement the
15 other programs and course offerings of the junior college and
16 whether the associate degree program offered by the junior college
17 in the same field has been successful;

18 (3) whether those degree programs would unnecessarily
19 duplicate the degree programs offered by other institutions of
20 higher education or whether a partnership with other institutions
21 of higher education is possible; and

22 (4) the ability of the junior college to support the
23 program with student enrollment and the adequacy of the junior
24 college's facilities, faculty, administration, libraries, and
25 other resources.

26 (e-1) A public junior college may offer a baccalaureate
27 degree program under this section only if its junior college

district meets the taxable property valuation amount established in Section 130.032.

(g) Except as provided by Subsection (g-1), in [In] its recommendations to the legislature relating to state funding for public junior colleges, the coordinating board shall recommend that a public junior college receive substantially the same state support for junior-level and senior-level courses offered under this section as that provided to a general academic teaching institution for substantially similar courses. In determining the contact hours attributable to students enrolled in a junior-level or senior-level course offered under this section used to determine a public junior college's proportionate share of state appropriations under Section 130.003, the coordinating board shall weigh those contact hours as necessary to provide the junior college the appropriate level of state support to the extent state funds for those courses are included in the appropriations. This subsection does not prohibit the legislature from directly appropriating state funds to support junior-level and senior-level courses offered under this section.

(g-1) For the first two years in which a degree program created under Subsection (b)(2) is offered, the degree program may be funded solely by a public junior college's proportionate share of state appropriations under Section 130.003, local funds, and private sources.

SECTION 2. This Act takes effect immediately if it receives a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each house, as provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution. If this

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1 Act does not receive the vote necessary for immediate effect, this
2 Act takes effect September 1, 2017.